

XEROX

Xerox DocuColor 242

55ppm / 40ppm

Xerox DocuColor 252

65ppm / 50ppm

Xerox DocuColor 260

75ppm / 60ppm



Sum-up: Heavy-duty, high-volume color printers with impressive image quality.

These impressive light production machines are built on a relatively new platform to the Xerox line. For the most part, the DocuColor 242 and 252 address the low end of the production market, while the newly introduced DocuColor 260 meets more substantial production demands. However, some units could likely be placed with high-volume office color users as well. Output speeds are very fast. The 242 runs at 40ppm in color, the 252 operates at 50ppm in color, and the new 260 operates at 60ppm.

List prices are slightly better than earlier models, so you actually get more pages per minute for your dollar. The 242 now lists for \$29,900, and the 252 is priced at \$34,700. The new 260 is listed for \$39,200. Controllers cost extra — but base price on each of these models has been reduced sufficiently to enable you to cover a substantial portion of the cost of a basic controller.

Image quality is excellent. The models print and copy at 2,400dpi without interpolation, the highest resolution of any color laser printer on the market. The high resolution is made possible by the machines' 32-beam laser and use of Xerox's Emulsion Aggregation (EA) toner. The toner, which is organically grown rather than mechanically produced, offers attractive supply costs and image quality.

These machines are identical in all ways except speed and have the same accessories.

Connectivity with both Windows

and Mac systems is achieved via standard Ethernet. The machines come with PostScript and PCL standard.

The models' standard paper supply has dual 500-sheet paper trays, an 870-sheet paper tray, an 1,140-sheet paper tray, and a 250-sheet bypass standard. An optional 2,000-sheet large-capacity tray lists for \$2,000 for 8.5" x 11" and \$5,995 for paper sizes up to 13" x 19". The models also come standard with an impressive high-capacity reversing document feeder that holds up to 250 sheets. Duplexing is also handled by this feeder.

Another strong point is media support. The machines' main paper trays and 2,000-sheet large-capacity tray handle paper weights from 18lb. bond to 110lb. index, in sizes up to 11" x 17". The bypass tray handles up to 140lb. index. Maximum paper size for the bypass is 13" x 19", which is useful for printing full-bleed proofs and originals. The machines' maximum monthly duty cycle is a decent 200,000 pages for the DocuColor 242 and 252 models and 300,000 pages for the 260 model.

The range of output features is respectable, but they're all options among which you'll have to choose one. First on the list is an inexpensive 500-sheet offset catch tray that goes



Xerox DocuColor 252 — High resolution laser printing with EA toners allow this model to produce excellent image quality.



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for \$300. Next there is a basic finisher that has 500-sheet and 3,000-sheet trays, 50-sheet multiposition stapling, and a 2/3-hole punch unit that lists for \$2,995. More advanced applications can be addressed by a finisher with 500-sheet and 1,500-sheet trays, 50-sheet multiposition stapling, 2/3-hole punch, and booklet making that goes for \$4,995. Finally, you can choose the previous finisher enhanced with an interposer for \$11,800. An additional tri- and Z-fold unit is an option with this last finisher for an additional \$5,700.

As can be expected from Xerox, the list of controller options is outstanding, and you get a choice between five different print controllers:

- **EFI Fiery controller:** This \$6,995 built-in network controller includes basic tools to program, monitor and manage workflows, as well as tools for color management. It comes with a 2GHz processor, 512MB of RAM, and an 80GB hard drive.
- **EFI Splash RPX-ii Color Server:** This server software option is the Fiery built-in network controller. It improves color, document, and production management features for more demanding work. It's also designed to improve RIPping performance and increase processing speeds for all hardware configurations.
- **EFI Fiery Color Server:** This external controller option (\$22,000) provides advanced color management tools and software upgrade options.

- **Creo Spire Color Server:** This color server is available in both attached and standalone versions for \$20,000. Through preflight checks to proofing, it permits an operator to see what a document will look like at each printing stage.

- **Xerox FreeFlow DocuSP Color Server:** This Xerox-developed controller is used on the company's production color printers. It lists for \$28,550.

The DocuColor 242, 252, and 260 are high-speed, high-volume color printers that offer Xerox's typically good image quality and a nice selection of features. The variety of optional print controllers available is another plus; no vendors can match Xerox in this regard. In our opinion, this all adds up to an Editor's Choice Award for these outstanding color printers.

Excerpted from *The High-Volume Printer & Digital Duplicator Guides*, volume 194, June, 2007. © 2007 Progressive Business Publications, Inc.

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